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Dining at Moishe's

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70th anniversary of Kristallnacht marked on Parliament Hill

By Liana Shlien

Hundreds gathered at the West Block on Parliament Hill November 9 to commemorate the 70th anniversary of Kristallnacht, the Night of Broken Glass.

On the night of November 9, 1938, rioters in Nazi Germany and Austria burned hundreds of synagogues and smashed the windows of thousands of Jewish-owned businesses and homes. Nearly 30,000 Jewish men were arrested and sent to concentration camps and 92 German Jews were killed.

The events of Kristallnacht marked a turning point for European Jewry and were a prelude to the organized extermination of six million Jews during the Holocaust.

Ambassadors and representatives from the embassies of Israel, Sweden, Hungary, Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Ukraine, Turkey, Lithuania, Switzerland, Por-

tugal and Sri Lanka attended the event, along with representatives of Ottawa's Rwandan community.

"What we're here tonight to do is to recall history and make sure we don't forget history," said Ottawa Centre MP Paul Dewar in his introduction of keynote speaker David Kilgour.

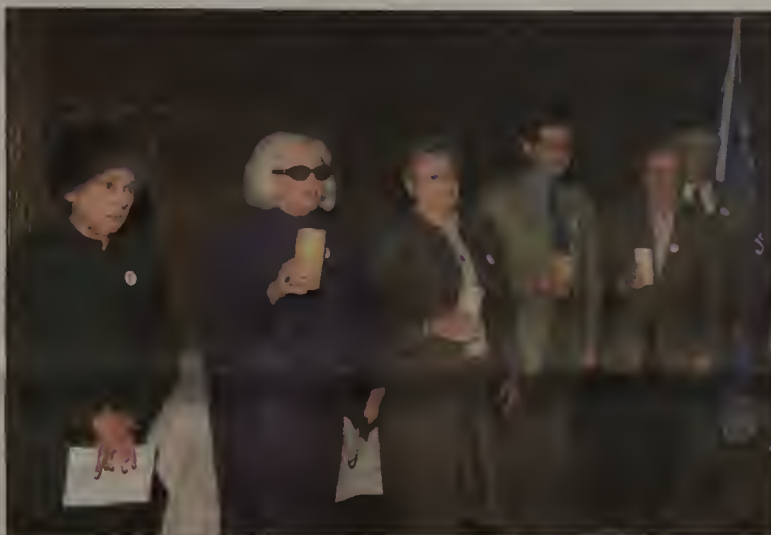
Kilgour, a former MP and cabinet minister from Edmonton, is an international human rights activist and commended the assembly for coming out in such large numbers in a show of remembrance and solidarity.

"You made a statement by your attendance tonight," he said.

The event was organized by the Shoab (Holocaust) Committee of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa in collaboration with event chair Vera Gara.

Kilgour acknowledged that many members of his own Christian faith

(Continued on page 2)



Six survivors (from left to right), Anna Heilman, Truda Rosenberg, Vera Kovesi, Barry Davis, David Moskovic and George Gara, each lit memorial candles representing one million Jews murdered during the Holocaust. (Photo: Peter Waiser)

Terry Schwarzfeld acclaimed national president of CHW

By Michael Regenstreif

Delegates from Canadian Hadasah-WIZO (CHW) chapters across the country gathered in Calgary last week for the organization's 39th triennial convention and elected Terry Schwarzfeld of Ottawa by acclamation to serve as their national president. She began her three-year term on November 18.

CHW the Canadian arm of two international organizations of Jewish women – Hadassah International and World WIZO (Women's In-

ternational Zionist Organization) – was founded in 1917.

Schwarzfeld is CHW's third national president to come from Ottawa and follows founding president Lillian Freiman, who served from 1917 until her death in 1940, and Marion Mayman, now of Toronto, who served from 1999 until 2002.

Schwarzfeld was born in Regina to a Zionist family; her mother and grandmother were both CHW members. Growing up, she was ac-

tive in BBYO and Young Judea and moved to Ottawa with her husband, Stephen Cotsman, in 1972 after graduating from the University of British Columbia. In Ottawa, she earned her master's degree from Carleton University.

As a newcomer to Ottawa, Schwarzfeld accepted Toby Yan's invitation to become a member of Amit Chapter, thus beginning many years of CHW activism.

Locally, Schwarzfeld is a past-president of Amit Chapter and was

twice president of CHW's Ottawa Council. She has also served on the national executive board since 1993, including terms as vice-president and, for the past three years, as honorary vice-president until assuming the presidency last week.

A few days before leaving for the Calgary convention, Schwarzfeld – the mother of sons David, 30, Adam, 26, and Simon, 20, and the grandmother of 10-month-old Benjamin – spoke to the *Bulletin*

about CHW and about what her role as president will entail.

"It's a large organization," she said. "About 10,000 women from coast to coast are members and they come from both large centres and small centres. Historically, it was often the only Jewish women's organization aside from [synagogue] sisterhoods in small towns across the country.

"I'll be away from home a lot. Over my three-year term, I hope to

(Continued on page 2)

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Schwarzfeld is longtime CHW activist

(Continued from page 1)
visit each of the centres across the country.

"I need an invitation," she laughed, "so I'm hoping they'll invite me."

She'll also be travelling to Israel regularly during her term for World WIZO meetings and to visit World WIZO, Hadassah International and CHW's projects there.

Among the CHW projects in Israel are six day-care centres, including the one supported by its Ottawa membership in Acco.

"We support four schools, two youth villages and two women's centres, and our funding also supports a shelter and a women's hotline."

CHW also provides financial support to two hospitals in Israel: Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem and the Assaf Harofeh Hospital near Tel Aviv.

Schwarzfeld said her role as president will be to help

maintain the CHW vision as a Zionist organization and to promote the many projects for women and children that CHW funds and supports in Israel.

"You have to keep everybody in the loop, so there's a whole communications role."

Schwarzfeld will also be involved in CHW fundraising efforts and in encouraging the membership to fundraise for our cause."

Another of her priorities will be to work on expanding the CHW membership base.

"Times have changed," she said, "and that's not as simple as it used to be."

Schwarzfeld said there's been a decline in membership that can be partly attributed to the aging of the population and partly to the changed role of women in society.

"I don't think young women necessarily look to these kinds of organizations

in the same ways they always did," she said. "So it's a challenge to us to keep up with the times and make the organization interesting to younger women."

During her term Schwarzfeld also plans to look at modernizing CHW's governance structure so that it can function more efficiently.

In talking with Schwarzfeld about CHW, her commitment to the organization, indeed her love for it and the work it does, is obvious.

When asked if there were CHW projects that are of particular importance to her, she quickly mentioned the Acco day-care centre supported by the Ottawa chapters. Visiting the day-care this past March, she saw Jewish, Arab and newly immigrated children playing together.

"Kids are kids," she said, "and that gives one hope when you see that."

The other project she called attention to was Hadassah Hospital.



Terry Schwarzfeld was installed as national president of Canadian Hadassah-WIZO on November 18 at the national convention in Calgary.

(OJB photo, Michael Regenstreif)

"It was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in 2005. Once you walk in that door, everybody is a person and all the barriers fall away. It's amazing."

Mailbag

Afternoon school a serious option for Jewish education

While I generally agree with the theme of Rabbi Finkelstein's column (from the Pulpit: *Discarding ideological differences in the name of unification*, November 10), I was greatly concerned by a comment regarding modern Orthodox families choosing public schools.

He claimed some parents didn't feel that day schools provided an adequate religious education and wondered how they would get such from a public school. The answer is by combining the public school experience with attendance at Ottawa Talmud Torah Afternoon School (OTTAS). Our school provides 50 per cent of the hours of Jewish education provided in a day school, and our classes are taught by certified professional teachers. These include an Orthodox rabbi and a member of Young Israel Congregation.

It is unlikely that modern Orthodox parents are choosing public education because of a failure of day schools to meet their religious needs. It is more likely that cost is a factor, or they want French immersion, more visual arts, music and drama, or they have a child with a learning disability who can't be served in a trilingual day school program.

Rabbi Finkelstein and I agree that the concern should be that many Jewish parents are choosing NOTHING for their children. Leaders in this community, including supporters of day schools, need to start looking at OTTAS as a serious option for families who reject Jewish day schools of any persuasion.

Shawn Manner

Principal, Ottawa Talmud Torah Afternoon School

Kilgour stresses need to unite against hatred and apathy

(Continued from page 1)

in Europe dishonoured one of their key religious commandments: "to love one's neighbour as oneself" when they stood by as their countrymen were persecuted, deported and murdered by the Nazis.

"We must not allow history to be repeated," he said.

need to stand united against hatred and apathy; the need to act promptly against intolerant words or actions, and the need for the world to condemn totalitarian regimes and end their policy of human rights violations.

"We must not allow history to be repeated," he said.

In particular, he cited Holocaust denial and anti-Israel rhetoric by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as meriting serious concern and attention.

"No one anywhere should tolerate such a dangerous situation," he said.

"We must not allow history to be repeated," he said.



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DOLLS FOR DARFUR

The *Dolls for Darfur Campaign* was started to raise awareness about the genocide happening in the Darfur region of Sudan. Doll pins will be made and donated to the *Dolls for Darfur Campaign* which is a collaborative project of Temple Emanu-El of Dallas Texas, the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism and the Union for Reform Judaism's Commission on Social Action. (This activity to be done by grade six students of Hillel Academy and Charles H. Hulse Public School, December 2nd at Hillel Academy.)

NIGHT NIGHT BAGS

Night Night Bags will be made to comfort children in crisis care. They will be distributed by the Children's Aid Society and the Ottawa Police to children dealing with various traumas, including being removed from their homes.

BRIGHTEN YOUR DAY

Crafts will be created for seniors to brighten someone's day! They will be distributed by Jewish Family Services through the Thelma Steinman Seniors Support Unit.

CHEO KITS

When children are checked into CHEO they are given kits containing necessities for their stay. Our kits will be made for the parents of sick children and will include basic personal hygiene items needed throughout their child's stay, leaving them with one less thing to worry about.

WELCOME KITS

In 2007, Canada welcomed 236,759 immigrants from all across the world. Kits made will include maps, transit information, dictionaries and more. They will be given to new immigrants to help make their transition into the Ottawa region easier.

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Lunch bags will be made and distributed to people on the streets with the help of two organizations: Streetsmarts and Centre 454.

MITZVAH DAY
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Free Breakfast at 8:00 am
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Secular candidate Nir Barkat elected mayor of Jerusalem

By Uriel Heilman (JTA) – The victory by secular businessman Nir Barkat in Jerusalem's mayoral election was greeted with relief by Israelis concerned about the increasingly fervently Orthodox character of the city.

Barkat, a city councilman and high-tech entrepreneur, defeated his fervently Orthodox rival, Rabbi Meir Porush, 52 per cent to 43 per cent, in the November 11 election. The other high-profile candidate, Russian-Israeli tycoon Arcadi Gaydamak, finished a distant third with less than 4 per cent of the vote.

Barkat's election returns control of City Hall to secular hands five years after Jerusalem elected its first fervently Orthodox mayor, Uri Lupolianski. Barkat lost by a narrow margin in 2003.

While Lupolianski, the founder of Yad Sarah, the highly regarded nonprofit or-

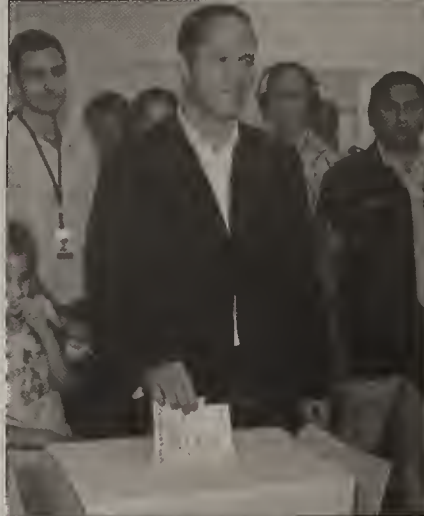
ganization that aids the elderly and disabled, was widely seen as sympathetic to secular concerns, his would-be Orthodox successor, Porush, was not thought to share those sympathies.

Earlier this month, Porush told a fervently Orthodox audience that "in another 15 years there will not be a secular mayor in any city in Israel."

His remarks, delivered in Yiddish at a yeshiva, were not intended for public consumption, but Porush was unaware that an Orthodox radio station was broadcasting his remarks live.

During the campaign, Porush's spokesman acknowledged that the candidate, a veteran fixture of Israel's Orthodox political scene and a seventh-generation Jerusalemite, was a proponent of Orthodox-only cities.

The victory by Barkat, a self-made millionaire and



Nir Barkat, Jerusalem's victorious mayoral candidate, casts his vote in the November 11 election.

(Photo: Brian Hendler)

venture capitalist, comes at a pivotal time for the Israeli capital.

With one-third of its residents Orthodox and one-third Arab, Jerusalem is Israel's largest city, and its poorest. A recent survey of Israel's 15 largest cities ranked Jerusalem last in terms of livability. The city is wracked by political and religious divisions, and its young, secular population is dwindling due to a dearth of affordable real estate, limited job opportunities and what some decry as its increasingly Orthodox

character.

Many Jerusalemites during the campaign pointed to the controversy surrounding a celebration in June marking the opening of a new bridge at the western entrance to the city as emblematic of the battle for Jerusalem's soul.

At the ceremony, a fervently Orthodox deputy mayor compelled a teenage girls' dance troupe to wear hats and long, loose-fitting clothing so as not to offend the sensibilities of Orthodox viewers. Many Jerusalemites and Israelis were outraged, blaming Lupolianski for what they called the Taliban-style outfits.

For these residents of Jerusalem – modern Orthodox included – Barkat's election is a welcome change from five years of fervently Orthodox leadership.

"There is the sense that if another ultra-Orthodox mayor gets elected, the city's last secular residents will leave," one voter told Israel's Channel 10 News on election day. "There's a feeling that this is the last chance for this city."

In his victory speech, Barkat said, "I'm aware of the depth of the challenge and the complexity of the mission. Now is the time to work together for the good of the city."

Despite Barkat's victory, his political party, Jerusalem Shall Succeed, finished second in city council elections behind Porush's United Torah Judaism.

The vote was marred by some irregularities. Barkat voting slips apparently disappeared from some polling stations, and his website was victimized by hackers who redirected surfers to Porush's site.

At another polling station,

a group of Orthodox men reportedly hurled a stone at a police officer, lightly injuring him, in a bid to bar people from voting. Police dispersed the group.

During the campaign, Barkat campaigned on a platform of investing in the city's tourism-based economy and ensuring that Israel's capital city remains majority Jewish.

"We have to build Jerusalem economically," Barkat told JTA in an interview earlier this year.

"Jerusalem has only 1.5 million tourists that come annually. We have more to offer than any city. We have to open Jerusalem up to the global tourism marketplace."

While the turnout exceeded the last municipal elections, in 2003, the vast majority of Jerusalem Arabs stuck to their policy of boycotting the city's elections.

There were also municipal elections in dozens of other cities and towns across Israel, from Tel Aviv to Sderot, on November 11. In Tel Aviv, incumbent Ron Huldai handily defeated his challenger.

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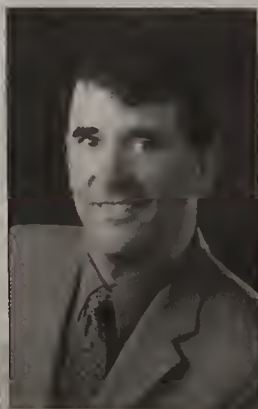
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What's happening at Congregation Beth Shalom

Saturday, November 29	Saturday Night Fever Dance
Thursday, December 4	Kibitz Club Luncheon
Friday, December 5	Kabalat Shabbat Service and Dinner
Sunday, December 14	Mad Science Hanukkah Event
Friday, January 9	Kabalat Shabbat Service and Dinner
Monday, January 12	Book Club

Watch for more upcoming events. Everyone is Welcome!

For more information, please contact the synagogue
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A busy night at Moishe's Grill.



Mark and Gladys Zarecki enjoying dinner at Moishe's Grill.

(OJB photos: Michael Regenstreif)

Moishe's Grill: Israeli-style restaurant now open at the SJCC

By Michael Regenstreif

Walking up the steps to the second floor of the Soloway Jewish Community Centre (SJCC) at lunch time or dinner time, you're likely to encounter the mouthwatering aromas of freshly grilled food, including steaks, burgers, kebabs and chicken.

Although there's no sign up yet, the smells are from Moishe's Grill, an Israeli-style kosher meat restaurant that opened this fall in the space formerly occupied by the dairy-only Rideau Bakery Café. In fact, it is the only meat restaurant available to kashrut-observant Ottawans who have long longed for some place to go for a good steak.

"It's Ottawa's first good kosher restaurant," said enthusiastic diner Mark Zarecki, executive director of Jewish Family Services, while enjoying dinner with his wife Gladys, one evening this month.

"The food is very good. You can't ask for more."

In addition to the various grilled specialties, popular menu items at Moishe's Grill

include Israeli-style salads and sandwiches, falafel, and, after 5 pm, sushi prepared fresh on the premises by an experienced sushi chef. There's also a chef's special that changes daily.

Moishe's Grill was opened by Moshe and Karen Segalovich, an Israeli couple now living in Montreal who operate two popular kosher restaurants there – Prime Grill on Queen Mary Road and the Yakimono Sushi Bar on Decarie Boulevard. The menu at Moishe's Grill in the SJCC draws on the best of both establishments.

Moshe and Karen and their staff have been enjoying the experience of getting their Ottawa restaurant up and running.

"The people in Ottawa are more appreciative" than Montrealers who have long enjoyed a choice of kosher restaurants, says Karen.

Karen encourages anyone who hasn't been to Moishe's Grill yet to give it a try.

"And we're always open to suggestions," she says, "about the chef's specials. They're always different."

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Hillel Ottawa: a great start to a promising year on campus

Editor's note: JFO Chair Jonathan Freedman has arranged to share his column, on occasion, with the chairs or presidents of the community's major beneficiary agencies or committees so they can provide some insight into their operations.

With the 2008-09 school year now well underway, I'm happy to report that Hillel Ottawa – the Foundation for Jewish Campus Life has got off to a fabulous start and that turnout at our events has consistently exceeded all our hopes and expectations.

Whether it has been at our Shabbat dinners, which have attracted between 90 and 130 people, or our annual welcome barbecue, which drew over 100 students, Jewish and Jewish-curious students continue to feel welcome and at home at Hillel Ottawa.

One of the most encouraging things about those high turnouts is that with each new event, we continue to attract new faces. Hillel Ottawa's goal is to be "everything and anything" for Jewish students on campus, so it is very rewarding to present programming that attracts the interest of a variety of students, many of whom are coming



Federation Report

Rafael Shainfarber
Hillel Ottawa

to Hillel events for the first time. Whether they have been enjoying some "pizza in a hut" for Sukkot, or watching an Israeli film at the ByTowne Cinema, students continue to come out and enjoy our events.

In keeping with the theme of "new," much of the Hillel Ottawa executive and staff – from the city-wide president to the executive director – are new this year. Fortunately, the team has quickly learned to work together, and we have benefited from the advice of past executive and staff members who have been extremely helpful in facilitating the transition.

On November 2, the Hillel Ottawa executive attended a brunch at Congregation Machzikei Hadas welcoming the new presidents of the University of Ottawa and Car-

leton University to Ottawa's Jewish community. Both Allan Rock of uOttawa and Roseann Runte of Carleton spoke of their commitments to work closely with the community. The event also provided us with a wonderful opportunity to meet faculty and administrators from both universities and to spend some time talking with community members.

... our dedicated team
of student volunteers
and staff members
are committed
to making this
a year to remember.

November 2 to 9 marked Hillel Ottawa's Holocaust Education Week. On November 3, we partnered with Alpha Epsilon Pi, the Jewish fraternity, and held a name reading ceremony on Parliament

Hill. Despite the cold weather, more than 50 students, both Jewish and non-Jewish, stood silently around the Centennial Flame as the names of Holocaust victims were read. It was truly special for us to see so many caring students huddling together to remember the six million Jews whose lives were taken during that terrible time in our history.

On the Friday of Holocaust Education Week, we hosted our second annual Shabbat dinner with Holocaust survivors. This event has quickly become one that students look forward to. Indeed, the students really appreciate opportunities like this when we can show the depth of our appreciation to the Holocaust survivors in our community.

In short, the year has got off to a fabulous start and we are very hopeful about the months to come. There is no doubt that there will be challenges ahead, but our dedicated team of student volunteers and staff members are committed to making this a year to remember.

For more information about Hillel Ottawa, visit hillelottawa.ca or e-mail us at info@hillelottawa.ca

Let us recreate Hakhel! We are, after all, family

Can you imagine all the Jews in the world coming together? All Jews, without exception, assembled in one place, for one purpose, with one heart?

Historically, in the time of the Second Temple, this used to take place once every seven years. It is instructed in the Torah that, once every seven years, during the festival of Sukkot following a *Shmitah* (sabbatical) year, the entire Jewish nation – men and women, infants and their great-grandmothers, scholars and laypeople – assemble in Jerusalem. A hush would fall over the mammoth crowd, as the king of Israel ascended on to a platform and read sections of the Torah aloud.

This scene repeated itself in ancient Jerusalem on a septennial basis. This event was known as *Hakhel*, which means 'assemble.' This year – 5769 – which we just commenced, is the year of *Hakhel*. It is the year when this amazing gathering would take place.

Once in seven years, the entire nation – every single Jew – would come together to re-experience the moment when our nation stood at Mount Sinai, when every member of our nation was present when God gave us the Torah. At the onset of a new seven-year



From the pulpit

Rabbi
Menachem Blum
OTC Chabad

cycle, when the nation was ready to head back to the fields and orchards, they would gather for a dose of inspiration. Inspiration to tide them over for the next six years, most of which time would be spent in business endeavours.

The root of the Hebrew word *Hakhel* is *kahal* (community), as in the verse, "Morashah Kiblat Yaakov (Torah is an inheritance to the community of Jacob)." This represents a community of people who share an inherent bond, an intrinsic oneness, an essential commonality. "Kehilat Yaakov," we are all part of the kehilah/community of Jacob, because we are his children, his descendants. We are family.

Before we became a nation, we were a family. In the book of *Exodus*, we become a nation, but throughout the entire book of *Genesis*, we are a family. Even throughout

the rest of the Torah, the most common term used to describe the Jewish people is not "Am Yisrael (nation of Israel)," but rather "Bnei Yisrael," the children of Israel. We are the children of Jacob, whose name was also Israel. We are family. We are a family, we are brothers and sisters. Even if we share serious disagreements, we are one.

This year, being a year of *Hakhel*, we have an extraordinary potential to unite as Jews. Let us reach out to each other. Invite a Jew over for a Shabbat dinner. Gather together your family and friends to share stories, ideas, reflections, words of encouragement and inspiration. Make a class in your office, dedicated to personal growth and Torah wisdom. Let us recreate *Hakhel*!

This year, you may meet someone you do not know, another Jew, another member of the *mishpacha*. Say "hi" to them, greet them, make *Hakhel* with them. Perhaps, invite them for a barbecue, for a dinner, for a Shabbat meal. Let us recreate the feeling of *Hakhel*!

Let me suggest something ambitious. Over the next 12 months, let each of us resolve to organize a few gatherings, where we invite friends, relatives, business colleagues, strangers, to a gathering, a *Hakhel*, dedicated to Jewish unity.

Let's create a grassroots awakening that will make a difference for our community and for the Jewish people. Families deserve to be united. And we are, after all, family.

Letters welcome

Letters to the Editor are welcome if they are brief, signed, timely and of interest to our readership.

The *Bulletin* reserves the right to refuse, edit or condense letters.

The *Mailbag* column will be published as space permits. Send your letters to Michael Regenstreif, Ottawa Jewish Bulletin, 21 Nadolny Sachs Private, Ottawa, Ontario K2A 1R9; or send him an e-mail at mregenstreif@ottawajewishbulletin.com.



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Please allow me to introduce myself

I've been in Ottawa, working at the *Bulletin*, for almost 16 months now. As a newcomer to the community, I kind of just plunged into working from the deadlines of one issue to the next, first as assistant editor, working with Barry Fishman, and then acting as editor when Barry had to go on disability in February.

Along the way, of course, I've had a chance to meet and talk with many people in the community. I meet new people – new, at least, to me – almost every day when they drop by the office, when I attend community events or go out to cover a story for the *Bulletin* or in the hallways of the Joseph and Rose Ages Family Building as people arrive for and leave the many programs and events taking place at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre (SJCC).

Of course, though, there are so many more people I haven't had a chance to meet yet, so I thought I'd take a few paragraphs to tell you about myself.

I was born in Calgary and spent parts of my childhood in Calgary and Vancouver before my family moved back to my parents' hometown of Montreal when I was in high school in 1968. I lived in Montreal for almost 40 years before coming to Ottawa. I went to Jewish day schools in Calgary and Vancouver and then public high schools.



Acting Editor

Michael Regenstein

I went through the CEGEP system in Montreal, took some time off from school to work at journalism and arts administration, and then went back and got my BA in political science and my MA in public policy from Concordia University.

My father, who is now retired, was a Jewish community professional, so I've been around Jewish communal organizations all my life. I've even worked for some myself.

I spent four summers working at Camp B'nai Brith of Montreal and did two stints working with Hillel in Montreal in the 1970s and '80s directing their Golem Coffee House project.

As an editor and author, I've worked with a number of organizations, including Canadian Hadassah-WIZO, the Jewish General Hospital and the YMWHA in Montreal on magazine and book projects.

I first got into journalism as a music critic for the *Montreal Gazette* in 1975

and have been at it – sometimes full time, sometimes as a sideline – ever since. As a 'Jewish journalist,' I did general reporting and feature writing for the *Canadian Jewish News* in Montreal for nearly two decades.

I've done some other things along the way, but that's basically the path that led me to the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin*. It's a newspaper with an incredibly rich history having served and documented Ottawa's Jewish community for more than 70 years.

And I'm happy to be here.

As Ottawa's Jewish community newspaper, the *Bulletin* fulfils a number of roles. We report the news of our own community and use the resources of JTA to report important and interesting stories from the wider Jewish world. We're an outlet for all manner of Jewish agencies and organizations active in Ottawa to get their news out to the rest of the community.

If your organization has news, please make sure we know about it. If you're presenting an interesting speaker, we may well want to cover the event as a news story.

And in our various columns we try to provide you with food for thought about issues of concern, amuse you with humour, give you some great recipes to try, and turn you on to books you may want

to read (or avoid) or music or films you might enjoy (or want to skip).

Your letters to the editor are welcome if you've got something to say about what you read in the *Bulletin* or on an issue of concern to the community. We're also open to guest columns.

So, if you've got news for us, stories to contribute, suggestions to make, I want to hear from you.

You can call me at 613-798-4696, ext. 310, or send e-mail to me at mregenstein@ottawajewishbulletin.com.

I mentioned in the first paragraph that Barry Fishman went on disability in February. The most frequently asked question I get is, "How's Barry?"

Barry continues to face up to the extremely difficult medical circumstances of ALS – Lou Gehrig's Disease – with an awe-inspiring combination of determination, courage and dignity.

As editor emeritus of the *Bulletin*, Barry continues to be an invaluable source of guidance and advice as we strive to maintain, and build on, the standards he set during his tenure as editor. Most of what I've learned, and continue to learn, about how the *Bulletin* works, and about how it should work, and much of what I've learned about Ottawa's Jewish community, comes from my ongoing conversations with Barry.

Are we in a new, post-partisan political era?

A friend of mine used to be a major partisan of a major political party.

Come election time, there were few lawn signs bigger than his. He would tirelessly canvas for his chosen candidate and take it pretty hard if that candidate did not triumph. The ebbs and flows of his party's fortunes would influence his own frame of mind.

He would socialize among fellow members of his party, enthusiastically devote large chunks of free time to party activities and view most public issues through a partisan lens.

Although I never asked him this question, I'm reasonably certain, if someone had told him to state five adjectives that best described himself, one of those adjectives would match the capitalized name of his political party.

As a journalist, I zealously follow partisan politics, and have covered it for many years. But I've never been a member of – or loyal to – any political party. Although I find party politics fascinating, and admire the passion and commitment of many of its practitioners, I've never quite been able to understand what it's like from the inside, or what it's like to want to be on the inside.

From my comfortable perch as an outside observer, I can see a parallel between



Alan Echenberg

the fervor of party members and that of, say, sports fans. A potent brew of dedication, single-minded enthusiasm, hope and faith seems to drive both groups of people. Is the Toronto Maple Leafs fan, whose perennial belief that his team is finally going to win the cup, any different in temperament, loyalty and optimistic outlook from the NDP partisan who believes Jack Layton will become the next prime minister?

Just as dedicated Leafs fans will have trouble appreciating the talent and superior appeal of the Montreal Canadiens, so too will partisans have a tough time conceding that any other party may have a better approach than their own on any given issue.

That element of partisanship is the double-edged sword of political life. It helps parties to mobilize, focus and compete for power. Unapologetically partisan Liberal strategist Warren Kinsella titled

his guide to doing all of the above *Kicking Ass in Canadian Politics* because he argued that doing so is a necessary precursor to implementing the vision that brings anyone into politics in the first place.

On the other hand, the hyper-partisanship of political parties is probably one of the root causes of voter cynicism, apathy and low election turnout in the population at large.

Recently, my once-partisan friend started a new job that requires him to be unfiliated with any political party. During last month's federal election campaign, there was no lawn sign in front of his house. I asked him if he found it hard to stay out of the fray and was surprised to hear him say he didn't.

His job keeps him engaged with political issues and the political process, but he said that being outside partisan politics gave him a perspective he didn't have before. Now, when he hears party members react to any given issue in a fiercely partisan way, he smiles and thinks, "I used to be like that."

Is my friend onto something? In the recent American presidential election, one of the big buzzwords was *post-partisanship*. The victory of President-elect Barack Obama was not only historic because he is set to become the first African

American president in history, but also because of the way he achieved his triumph.

Through grassroots efforts, and over the Internet, Obama mobilized voters and contributors like no one else had done before. Most notably, he appealed to younger voters with his inspiring talk of hope and change and with his unwavering message of unity across party lines and demographic groups.

"There is no red state, there is no blue state, there is only one United States of America," Obama thundered at campaign rally after rally. The message resonated with post-partisan young voters. Early indications are that voter turnout among youth was higher than in any other American election except that of 1972, the first election after the voting age was lowered to 18.

Does Obama's win mean we're in a new political era? Hard to say. Obama himself muddied the waters when he appointed Congressman Rahm Emanuel, who has a reputation as one of the most hyper-partisan Democrats in Washington, as his chief of staff.

An acknowledgement, maybe, that even in a post-partisan world, there are still political benefits to 'kicking ass.'

Alan Echenberg is TVOntario's Parliamentary bureau chief.



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Yitzhak Rabin High School to move onto campus during December break

By Nicola Hamer
Hillel Academy
communications director

Editor's note: This is the second in a continuing series of articles being prepared by Nicola Hamer on the revitalization of Jewish education in Ottawa.

Hillel Academy has been Ottawa's largest Jewish day school for decades. But it's always been an elementary school. Until 13 years ago, students graduating from Grade 8 had no other choice but to move on to public or private secular schools. Then parents wanting a Jewish option for secondary education opened Yitzhak Rabin High School (YRHS).

For a number of years, YRHS has been renting space in the basement of the empty Confederation High School building at the corner of Woodroffe Avenue and Hunt Club Road. While this building gave the

school a significant amount of space, YRHS was also isolated from the Jewish Community Campus, the focal point of Jewish life in Ottawa.

As the number of students enrolled in Jewish education declined, the distance from the campus began to be something of a concern and the YRHS board decided that moving closer would benefit the school.

The concern was not simply in the declining numbers. Those running the high school feel it is important to have the teenaged students involved in community life. A move closer to the campus would allow the school to get its students involved in a much greater way.

It was a happy coincidence then that, at the same time as the YRHS board was looking for a way to move near the campus, the Jewish Federation of Ottawa was becoming more determined to fight the decline of Jewish school enrollment by revitalizing day school education.

The Federation had held a symposium in February 2006 to examine the community's future and to explore the big issues and concerns it faces.

"When the Federation engaged the community in



Donna Palmer-Dodds, head of schools of Hillel Academy and Yitzhak Rabin High School, looks forward to YRHS being on campus.

(OJB photo: Michael Regenstreif)

an in-depth discussion about our future at the 2006 symposium, Jewish education was reinforced as our greatest priority," says Jonathan Freedman, Federation chair.

"One specific area that received a lot of attention was the very pressing need to have a vibrant and growing community high school. It was felt that more high school students getting an excellent education and fully engaged in Jewish community life would be of tremendous benefit to our future success."

One of the suggestions was that YRHS move into the Hillel Academy building at 31 Nadolny Sachs

Private on the Jewish Community Campus.

Initially, YRHS was uncertain about actually moving into the Hillel Academy building. There was a concern that the high school students might view moving into the building as a step backwards to their elementary school years. But, as the boards of two schools talked, a plan emerged for YRHS to have its own wing, with a separate entrance, thus clearly maintaining its own identity.

The renovations to the school building that will allow YRHS to make the move are now in the final stages and the move will be made during the December break. The high school students will return to class in January in their new facilities.

While everyone recognizes the need for the high school students to have their own space, putting both schools into the same building is also allowing for a great deal of co-operation that can only be of benefit to the two institutions.

It can be difficult running an entire school with only 40 students, thus limiting possible resources. So, as noted in the first article in this series (*Rambam now on campus with Hillel Academy: YRHS coming soon*, November 10), Hillel Academy and YRHS will not only share the building, they will share their administrative staff as well.

And, beyond the simple cost savings of sharing a building and administration, the move will also allow YRHS to revitalize its programs.

Sharing the teachers' lounge with Hillel and Rambam will mean much less isolation for YRHS's teachers. And both schools can share professional knowledge and educational resources in a much easier way.

The high school students, who all need 40 hours of volunteer work before they graduate, will be able to volunteer in the elementary school, as well as at other organizations on campus, including Hillel Lodge, Tamir and others.

If these advantages were not enough, being on the Jewish Community Campus will allow YRHS to significantly raise its profile in the community. The new head of schools, Donna Palmer-Dodds, thinks both schools will benefit from the move.

"Yitzhak Rabin's move onto the campus will not only allow its students to be more involved in community life, but I think it will foster a much greater connection between the elementary and high school students," says Palmer-Dodds. "I'm really looking forward to this move."

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Ottawa JNF 2008 Negev Dinner honouring Dan Greenberg and Barbara Crook a great success!

As I write, the 2008 Ottawa Negev Dinner on November 24 at the Museum of Civilization is still a few weeks off. So, you may well ask, how I could start with a headline declaring that it is a great success.

Well, as of November 5, the number of tickets sold is already at the point where the Great Hall will be practically full for the Negev Dinner and we are looking forward to a complete sell out.

Most importantly, thanks to the dedicated work of our Campaign Chairs, led by Ron Prehogan, our JNF volunteer and, in particular, our Honourees Barbara Crook and Dan Greenberg, the JNF fundraising for this year's project, the Barbara Crook and Dan Greenberg Reservoir at Mishmar HaYarden located north of Lake Kinneret, is a complete success. Thanks and Yasher Koach to everyone who worked on the campaign and to all of our many generous individual donors and corporate sponsors from the Ottawa Jewish community and the entire Ottawa community. I look forward to the next *Bulletin* to kvell (again, G-d willing) and to properly thank those who are participating in the evening.

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There is a calculator on our JNF Canada website at www.jnf.ca/goneutral where you can determine what you need to do to offset your carbon footprint. Please visit our website to make a (tax deductible) donation that will help JNF, and yourself, to 'heal the world.'

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Members meeting discusses possible usage of vacant land

By Michael Regenstreif

The possible future usage of a vacant lot adjacent to the Jewish Community Campus was the main topic of discussion at a members meeting held by the Jewish Federation of Ottawa on November 5.

The land is across Kerr Avenue from the campus at Nadolny Sachs Private and is bounded by Carling, Boyd and Kerr Avenues. The lot was purchased by the Federation in February 2006 and, for the time being, is being used as a parking lot for campus staff.

Jonathan Freedman, Federation chair, and Mitchell Bellman, president and CEO, reported that the land purchase was financed by a three-year private mortgage. They did not anticipate any problems in extending the mortgage.

They also noted that the land was not purchased to remain a parking lot. The discussion at the meeting was the beginning of the process of soliciting input from the community over the coming months on how the land should be used in the long term.

Several speakers from the floor speculated that their organizations might be interested in being part of a building on the site, should one be built.

The most concrete of the possible suggestions came from Mark Palmer, executive director of Tamir. Palmer said Tamir was in the early stages of developing a proposal for a multi-pur-

pose building that would include a number of apartments in an integrated living complex for Tamir clients.

Freedman said one of three possible decisions would need to be made in the coming months.

The first possibility would be the Federation's deciding it doesn't need the land, in which case it could be sold and the proceeds used in funding other priorities. The second would be a project in the short term and the third would be special fundraising to pay off the mortgage and reserve the land for use in the medium or long term.

"No one is in a position to build on the land tomorrow," said Freedman, adding that holding on to it is "not a bad investment."

Earlier in the meeting, Bellman reviewed progress the Federation has made in recent months in meeting strategic objectives.

Among the current initiatives Bellman pointed to was the revitalization of Ottawa's Jewish education system, noting that Hillel Academy and Yitzhak Rabin High School (YRHS) have jointly hired Donna Palmer-Dodds to head the administration of each school.

He also reported that the renovations to the school building are almost complete. The Rambam Day School has already moved into its space and YRHS will make its move to the building over the December break.

Bellman also called attention to a current online survey gathering input

from 18- to 35-year-olds in the community that will lead to an "emerging generations strategy" to recognize and respond to the needs of this demographic.

Among the other initiatives that Bellman said the Federation hoped to introduce in the short term are a program of ticket donations to help low-income members of the community to attend major events and a Shabbat-hosting program to reach out to the community's newcomers and to the unaffiliated.

He also noted that increasing opportunities for members of Ottawa's Jewish community to build connections to Israel and Israelis has been added to the Federation's strategic objectives.

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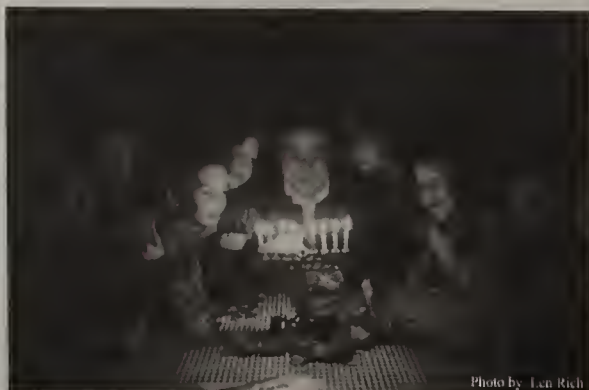


Photo by Len Rich



Adam Moscoe is presented with the Jewish War Veterans Award by Freda Lithwick of the Ottawa Post-Jewish War Veterans of Canada scholarship committee.



Tess Fischer receives the Max and Tessie Zelikovitz and Dorothy Nadolny Award.
(Photos: Larry Lithwick)

Jewish War Veterans announce scholarship award winners

Five accomplished Ottawa students each received \$1,000 scholarship awards when the Ottawa Post-Jewish War Veterans of Canada held their annual general meeting and brunch October 26 at Agudath Israel Congregation.

Adam Moscoe, now in his final year at Nepean High School, received the Jewish War Veterans Award.

Two students who graduated this year from Machon Sarah High School and are now studying at seminaries in Israel received Saul and Edna Goldfarb Awards. Elisheva Shaps is a student at Michlalah and Rivka Aptowitz is at Merkaz.

Naomi Muroff, now a student at the Maalot Seminary in Baltimore, was the recipient of the Abe Carlofsky Award.

The fifth scholarship, the Max and Tessie Zelikovitz and Dorothy Nadolny Award, was given to Tess Fischer who is now studying at McGill University in Montreal.

While the students now in Israel and the U.S. could not be there in person, Moscoe and Fischer were on hand to receive their awards.

The meeting also heard from guest speaker Eric Vernon of Canadian Jewish Congress who spoke on anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial.



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Betty Rose by Vera and Malcolm Glube

Nell Gluck Memorial Fund

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Dave Molot by Rabbi Alan and Linda Cohen

In Honour of:
Joseph Steinberg Mazal tov on your 95th birthday and best wishes for many more by Maureen and Henry Molot

R'fuah Shlema:

Fern Bybelezer by Maureen and Henry Molot

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In Honour of:
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Sarah Swedler Yasher Koach on receiving a well deserved honour from the Auxiliary of Hillel Lodge by Ruth Mendell; Karen and Ian Zunder and family; Rhonda, Danny and Shelby Levine; the Chazonoff-Mosse clan; Betty and Ed Rose; and Cynthia and Max Weinstein

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Helen Harper by the Residents, Board and Staff of Hillel Lodge
Chaya Perel Mogilevsky by Loma and Carl Raskin

Antonia Steenhackers by Doreen and Bill Skorenky; Rose and John Steenhackers; the Steenhackers grandchildren; Helen and John Kieff; and David Sheehan

Ruth Weitz by The Residents, Board and Staff of Hillel Lodge; and Francoise and Ron Vexler

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Sabrina and Jason Bercovitch Mazal tov and best wishes on the birth of your baby girl by Dobi and David Shore

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Bonnie and Chuck Merovitz Mazal tov on the birth of your first grandson by Betty and Ed Rose

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Community will gather on Mitzvah Day, December 7, to perform good deed projects

Although Mitzvah Day '08 will be taking place on Sunday, December 7 at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre (SJCC), Grade 6 students from Hillel Academy and Charles H. Hulse Public School will get a jumpstart on performing good deeds by making doll pins for the *Dolls for Darfur Campaign* on December 2.

The *Dolls for Darfur Campaign* was started to raise awareness about the genocide taking place in the Darfur region of Sudan. The pins represent an opportunity to educate others about the atrocities in Darfur.

Each individually packaged pin comes with a business-sized information card about the plight of the people of Darfur. Proceeds raised from the sale of the pins will be given to advocacy and humanitarian agencies working on the Darfur crisis.

Nearly 400,000 people have died in Darfur since 2003. More than two mil-

lion civilians have been forced to flee their homes and live in refugee camps in the Sudan and Chad and an estimated 15,000 people die each month.

The *Dolls for Darfur Campaign* was started by Temple Emanu-El of Dallas Texas, the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism and the Union for Reform Judaism's Commission on Social Action. Information about the project is available at dolls-fordarfur.org.

On Mitzvah Day itself, hundreds of children and adults will gather at the SJCC to perform such mitzvahs as painting reusable canvas lunch bags to decrease the environmental harm caused by throwaway plastic and paper bags, creating celebration kits to be brighten birthdays of people living in Ottawa-area shelters and making *night-night* bags to comfort children in crisis care.

Other Mitzvah Day projects include

making crafts, which Jewish Family Services will distribute to brighten someone's day, and CHEO kits to be filled with basic hygiene items needed by parents who are with their children during their hospital stays.

Mitzvah Day participants will also be assembling informational welcome kits to help new immigrants make their transition to life in the Ottawa area and lunch bags for the homeless.

Mitzvah Day begins with registration and free breakfast on Sunday, December 7 at 8 a.m. The mitzvahs get underway at 9:30 and conclude with a cake and ice cream party, and a performance by kid's entertainer Dr. Kaboom, at noon.

Mitzvah Day is sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Ottawa and chaired this year by Stacey Segal.

For information, contact Patrice Berdowski at 613-798-4696, ext. 241 or pberdowski@jewishottawa.com.



Dr. Kaboom will entertain the kids at the ice cream and cake party that caps off Mitzvah Day.

OTC offers adult programming and education

By Pherris Hamilton

for Ottawa Torah Center Chabad

The Ottawa Torah Center Chabad (OTC), which has been providing children's and family programs for the last decade in Ottawa, is presenting adult education programs this fall with courses ranging from Torah to Talmud, and even some Kabbalah and mysticism.

Many of the offerings are being presented in public spaces making them non-threatening to anyone who wants to participate. For example, we recently offered *Kosher: A Diet for the Soul*, a three-part seminar, at the Loblaw's at College Square, and are currently offering a Sunday book discussion on the subject of *Genesis* at Chapters Pinecrest.

Another course is *Soul Maps: Kabbalah to Novigate Your Inner World*, now ongoing on Tuesday evenings at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre and Thursdays during lunch hour downtown at the Ottawa Main Public Library.

OTC is also offering traditional *chovrut*-style learning where participants can choose the topic and time to explore their

Judaism on a one-on-one basis with a rabbi.

Call OTC at 613-823-0866 for information on these and other adult education opportunities or visit ottawatorohcenter.com or myjli.com.

OTC also appreciates your feedback and suggestions about topics and areas of study you would like to see explored in future courses.

Challah on Campus



JET's On Campus Program introduces students to the joys of challah baking, while raising money for the Solar Cooker Project to enhance the safety of women in Darfur. (Above, from left to right) are: Zach Cantor, Asher Farber and Eli Bitton; (at right) Sarah Librach, Rebecca Trueman and Jordana Trueman.



YRHS teacher honoured with Grinspoon-Steinhardt Award

By Christena Edwardson
for Yitzhak Rabin
High School

Teacher Shaya Rodal of Yitzhak Rabin High School (YRHS) has been named a Grinspoon-Steinhardt Award winner by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and the Steinhardt Foundation for Jewish Life.

"Mr. Rodal has been an exemplary teacher over the years and we are very proud of his achievements," said Rabbi Howard Finkelstein, director of Judaic studies at YRHS, who nominated him for the award.

Rodal began his post-

secondary education at Carmel College in London, England and later attended Oxford University where he majored in politics and philosophy. He then attended McGill University in Montreal where he obtained degrees in sociology and education and specialized in teaching history and Judaic studies.

The Grinspoon-Steinhardt Awards recognize and honour Jewish educators from across North America who have shown outstanding commitment to Jewish education. The awards were established in 2000 and are

administered by the Jewish Education Service of North America.

Rodal and four other Canadians were among the 68 teachers selected for the award this year. As a winner of the Grinspoon-Steinhardt Award, he received a monetary prize, a portion of which must be used for professional development.

Rodal, who previously taught at Akiba Hebrew Academy in suburban Philadelphia, is now in his fifth year at YRHS where he

teaches Jewish history, Talmud, Torah, civics and careers, and sociology.

"Mr. Rodal's classes are very informative and he is always willing to help his students outside of class time," said Adam Sadinsky, co-president of the YRHS Students Council.

"I enjoy teaching at Yitzhak Rabin because of the quality and character of the students and the family-type atmosphere," said Rodal. "And I enjoy the freedom Rabbi Finkelstein allows me

to develop the curriculum."

In addition to classroom responsibilities, Rodal established and leads the school band and is the faculty adviser for the Yitzhak Rabin Model United Nations team. His interests outside of school include music and sports.

"It is a great honour to be recognized," said Rodal after returning from the awards ceremony in New York City. "It was very positive, sharing ideas about Jewish education."



Shaya Rodal

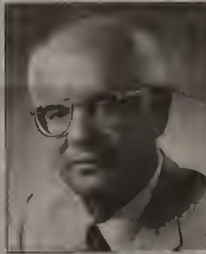
Donations in memory of Zeev Vered purchase essential life-support system

Donations made to the University of Ottawa Heart Institute in memory of Zeev Vered, who passed away June 9, will be used to purchase an essential Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) system valued at \$50,000.

An ECMO system – which is similar to the heart-lung machines employed during open heart surgery – is a vital life-support apparatus used in surgical intensive care units for patients whose diseased lungs and heart are not strong enough to pump enough oxygen to the blood and enough oxygen-rich blood to the rest of the body.

Many patients would die without modern ECMO systems.

Although the Heart Institute has two ECMO systems, one is an older, now obsolete system that will be replaced



Zeev Vered

by the one purchased with the funds donated in memory of Mr. Vered. With more than 1,500 cardiac surgeries performed annually at the Heart Institute, it is not an unusual circumstance for two ECMO systems to be needed at the same time.

Sara Vered told the *Bulletin* that the Vered family was most grateful for the many generous donations made to the Heart Institute in her late husband's memory.

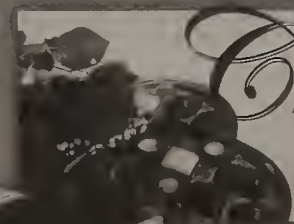
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Volunteer spotlight

The founding force behind AJA 50+

By Benita Siemiatycki

In the late 1990s, four active and knowledgeable women, Estelle Gunner, Cecily Bregman, Teena Hendelman and Ruth Levitan, were asked by Jewish Family Services (JFS) to study the situation facing Jewish seniors in Ottawa. All volunteers, the women examined statistics, held focus groups, talked to community agencies and identified emerging issues for this age group. Some 18 months later, reports were presented on three areas: transportation, housing, and programming.

They identified a lack of transportation options for Jewish seniors to safely and reliably take them to appointments and social events. In the area of housing, a gap existed in Jewish-based housing options for people who could not live independently anymore, but were not ill enough to qualify for a long-term care facility like Hillel Lodge. The last area, programming for more mature adults, was one the women felt they could actually tackle.

That was the beginning of Active Jewish Adults (AJA) 50+, an independent, non-profit, volunteer-driven organization that advocates for well Jewish seniors, and offers a wide variety of programs.

The first president was Ruth Levitan, who for three years was the driving force behind the success that AJA 50+ still enjoys. What started modestly in 2000 now boasts more than 500 members.



Social and recreational activities take on greater importance for older people, says AJA 50+ co-founder Ruth Levitan.

(OJB Photo: Benita Siemiatycki)

"Who would have believed in the concept of AJA?" asks Ruth incredulously. "In fact, people laughed at me when I said 'give me \$25.' They gave it to me, but they laughed at me."

Ruth credits her three committee colleagues, Teena, Cecily and Estelle, for motivating her to take on the presidency.

"I was very lucky to have met and been associated with those three," she says.

Year-round programs catering to diverse interests such as computers, music, photography, educational lectures, card games and field trips to various destinations have attracted men and women from all walks of life. Despite its name, the majority of AJA 50+ members falls between the ages of 65 and 75. Creative Connections is an affiliated program geared to more senior members. It offers a weekly full-day session that includes fitness, recreation, education and social activities.

Ruth is adamant that, as people age, their social and recreational activities take on greater importance.

"People are connecting and they're making a contribution. It's very important to build people's self-esteem, especially as they get older," she says.

Ruth has spent years volunteering in the Jewish community. Along with her work on AJA 50+, she worked for Hadassah, chaired the Talmud Torah Afternoon School Parents' Committee, assisted the Agudath Israel Sisterhood, sat on the Board of Jewish Family Services and worked on a proposal to establish a Jewish retirement home.

"I believe we have to get involved in our community," she says. "We're the only ones who can get involved in our community to make things better."

Currently, Ruth sits on the AJA membership committee, chairing the group's Bridge and Mah Jongg fundraiser held in October.

The daughter of immigrants from Poland and Germany, Ruth grew up in Ottawa. As a child, she attended programs at the old Jewish Community Centre. She and her husband Ron have two children – Riva, a family physician, and Michael, an industrial designer. Two grandsons attend Hillel Academy.

One of Ruth's strongest beliefs is that services be available to Jewish seniors when they're most in need. Citing national statistics, she predicts that in 10 years, 30 per cent of Jewish Ottawans will be over the age of 65. She still advocates for a community strategy to address what she sees as a need for assisted and affordable retirement housing for the Jewish community.

Elaine Wolfish, co-president of AJA 50+, says, "We have been so fortunate to have her leadership and vision in our organization."

As a founder, she already sees the value of what she's accomplished.

"This has been one of the most satisfying periods of my life," says Ruth. "When I see AJA 50+ and the needs that it meets, and has met, I'm absolutely thrilled."

For more information about AJA 50+, call 613-798-9818, ext. 309.

Benita Siemiatycki of the Jewish Ottawa InfoCentre profiles community volunteers in the Bulletin. Many organizations are in desperate need of volunteers. Call the InfoCentre at 613-798-4644 for information.

Ellenson: Jewish guilt translates into 'something powerful'

By Diane Koven

In a hall packed with Jewish women, there was bound to be plenty of guilt to go around. According to guest speaker Ruth Andrew Ellenson, the reasons Jewish women feel guilty are as diverse as the women themselves.

Speaking October 30 at Agudath Israel Congregation at the Women's Campaign of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa's Choices event, Ellenson revealed a few of the stories told to her by friends, leading to her decision to compile them into an anthology, *The Modern Jewish Girl's Guide to Guilt*, a collection of 28 stories on the theme.

Despite the success of the book, both in sales and in receipt of awards, Ellenson said it just wasn't enough.

"You can win a National Jewish Book Award and, to your parents, it's still not a grandchild. This is the guilt I live with," she said.

Ellenson introduced her own story of Jewish guilt by describing her background. Though her father and step-mother are both Reform rabbis in the United States, her mother is a convert to Judaism,



Featured speaker Ruth Andrew Ellenson with the Choices committee (from left to right): Debbie Weiss, Sarah Silverstein, Laila Wex, Jennifer Kardash (event chair), Ellenson, Linda Melamed, Lenora Zelikovitz and Adrienne Shabsove.

(Photo: Peter Waisner)

which means that Ellenson's maternal relatives are not Jewish. Born in Jerusalem and educated in the United States, she had a very strong Jewish education and upbringing. The dilemma came, however, when she spent her summers visiting her grandmother in Lynch Station, Virginia.

The guilt Ellenson felt while

attending church with her grandmother, all the while being acutely aware that, as an observant Jew, she should not be there, was partially assuaged by her decision to recite the *Sh'ma* quietly, under her breath. While sharing this experience with a friend, she was surprised to learn that her friend had her own guilty dilemma.

"Then I started talking to another friend of mine, Rebecca Walker, the daughter of Alice Walker, who had written a book called *Black, White and Jewish*. Walker's father is white and Jewish, and to add to the mix, she and her husband are both "black Buddhists in Brooklyn."

One by one, Ellenson collected her stories.

"The idea of who we should be, and the reality of who we were, were in conflict," she said.

Of course, said Ellenson, "no look at Jewish guilt would have been complete without a look at Jewish mothers."

She described one of the stories in the book about a mother who tried to outwit the call display feature on her daughter's telephone because she felt her daughter was avoiding her calls.

She also mentioned the infamous Monica Lewinsky.

"There was a dual pride and revulsion in the fact that this *zaitig* Jewish girl could seduce the president, versus the fear that the Jews would be blamed for bringing down the presidency [of the United States]."

"While focusing on guilt in the abstract," said Ellenson, "the book is really a modern Jewish woman's guide to loving yourself. The guilt translates into something very powerful. I hope that you can walk away from this not feeling guilt, but focusing on your love and the connection you feel to one another and your community."



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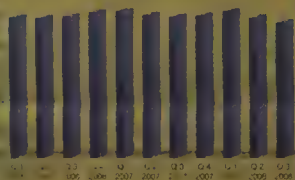


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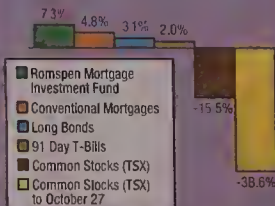
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Fears of another Durban at 2009 Geneva conference

By Michael J. Jordan

(JTA) – The run-up to a major United Nations (UN) anti-racism conference planned for April appears to be mimicking the 2001 Durban gathering that notoriously singled out Israel with the most incendiary language in the human-rights lexicon.

At a preparatory meeting last month in Geneva, the 'Asian Group' reintroduced language drawn from 2001 pressing for any final document to pronounce the Jewish state guilty of "a new kind of apartheid, a crime against humanity, a form of genocide" and "acts of racism." The group's Middle Eastern member-states bar Israel from joining.

Recent developments also brought renewed concern of a repeat of the anti-Jewish intimidation that marked the South African event seven years ago. Jewish activists fear that, despite platitudes to the contrary, the follow-up to the first anti-racism conference will unfairly target Israel.

The 2009 World Conference Against Racism, slated to take place in Geneva, is billed as the most important such gathering in years and one that advocates say must send a tough message to human-rights abusers.

Concerned about the direction the 2009 conference was headed, Israel and Canada have already vowed not to participate.

Many observers were looking to the European Union, which in September reiterated the "red lines" to avoid repetition of Durban 2001: no singling out of any state; no hierarchy of victims; and no outlasting of defamation of religions, which many see as infringing on free speech.

But after the preparatory conference, "the red lines aren't breached, they're shattered," said Hillel Neuer, executive director of UN Watch, a Geneva-based group affiliated with the American Jewish Committee.

While some defenders of Israel tend to dismiss the world body as hopelessly biased against the Jewish state, conferences such as the April 2009 meeting produce nonbinding

documents that, when cited and repeated often, can become building blocks for international law. At the very least, they fuel anti-Israel propaganda that shapes the opinion of millions worldwide.

That explains why events at Geneva last month sparked alarm.

Beyond the inflammatory text, dozens of nongovernmental organizations hostile to Israel unveiled their campaign for another NGO forum to coincide with the official diplomatic gathering.

It was the 2001 NGO forum in Durban that enshrined the most extreme anti-Israel language in its final document. It also launched the global boycott and divestment campaign that likened Israel to apartheid South Africa and is pursued today by many pro-Palestinian groups.

After the Israeli and U.S. delegations walked out in Durban, then-UN high commissioner for human rights Mary Robinson found the wording so excessive she declined to forward the text to government representatives to absorb into their own document.

By comparison, the official state-sponsored final declaration was far tamer and more balanced in addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The new high commissioner, Navanethem Pillay, opened the Geneva meeting last month by condemning "the virulent anti-Semitic behaviour" of some anti-Israel groups at Durban, but not the NGO document itself.

Pillay went on to acknowledge that "this review process is burdened, understandably, with a fear that incidents expressing hatred and intolerance will be repeated. It would be tragic to allow this fear to compromise our efforts to find common ground."

Yet with Libya chairing the process, and Iran, Cuba and Pakistan serving as vice-chairs, Jewish observers say it has become clear the Islamic bloc and its allies have widened the crosshairs to target the West itself. High on the agenda is Islamophobia, de-

nunciation of post-9/11 profiling of possible terrorists as inherently racist, and steps to ban defamation of religions like Islam.

Last spring, at another preparatory conference in Geneva, Israel's most strident critics were somewhat subdued. Some Jewish observers described them as on their "best behaviour," facing the real possibility that the Durban II process might disintegrate entirely.

Now, however, they are "laying their cards on the table," said human rights activist Anne Bayefsky, a professor at York University in Toronto and an adjunct professor at Touro College in New York.

"They attempted to cover up their real intentions, but we're only six months away from the conference, so they had to come out of the closet," said Bayefsky, a regular attendee of preparatory meetings.

During the spring sessions, the talk was to skip an NGO forum and instead fold NGO participation into the governmental gathering, with each group entitled to three to five minutes per day to speak. In Geneva last month, however, a coalition of UN-accredited NGOs mobilized to push for a parallel meeting of their own.

To date, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has received no official request, spokesman Rupert Colville told JTA.

"Whether or not there is an NGO forum depends essentially on the NGO community," he said. "It is up to them to decide."

Whether it would carry the imprimatur of the UN is another question.

"Between now and April, there will be constant struggle because the extremists who want to maximize the attacks on Israel see the NGOs as their primary vehicle," said Gerald Steinberg of the Jerusalem-based NGO Monitor. In the court of public opinion, Steinberg said, "NGOs have the facade as being above politics, representing universal morality and human rights principles."

Meanwhile, the Simon Wiesenthal Center has sent a letter to the mayor of Geneva in response to reports that the local Green Party had requested that the city host the NGO Forum. In imploring city officials to deny "a replica of the Durban hate-fest," the centre also called on the city to "provide all Jewish institutions in Geneva with adequate protection during the April event."

While it's unclear whether the new U.S. administration will attend or boycott the event, some Jewish groups are grappling with the question, too.

"We think it is vital that Jewish organizations be on the front line in defending Jewish interests, including Israel," said Sybil Sanchez, the director of B'nai B'rith International's office of UN affairs. "However, we are concerned that a point may come where the deck is so stacked against us that we would have to reconsider this approach. That moment has not arrived, and we are doing all we can to prevent it from arriving."



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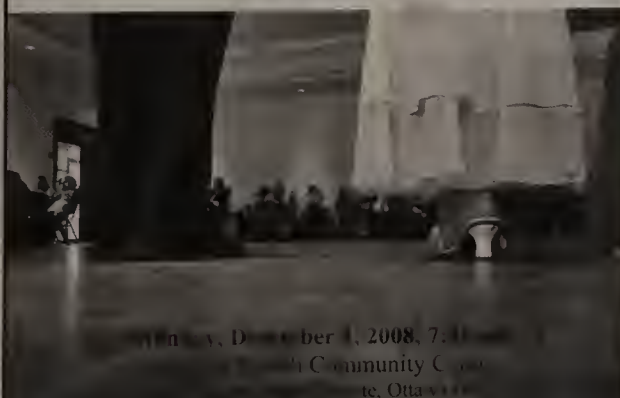
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Israeli circumcision experience helps fights AIDS in Africa

By Dina Kraft

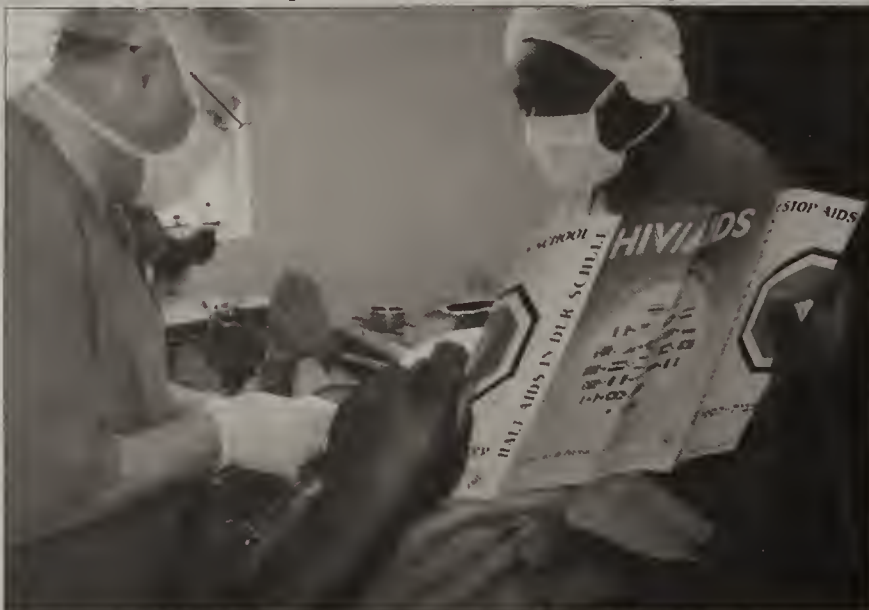
TEL AVIV (JTA) – In a clinic in the hills of Swaziland's capital, Israeli doctors have been training their counterparts in male circumcision, hoping expertise in the ancient technique will help in the battle against the modern scourge of AIDS.

The United Nations announced last year that the procedure could reduce the rate of HIV transmission by up to 60 per cent. It was in Israel, with its experience performing adult male circumcision on a wide scale, that the international medical community found an unlikely partner in the global fight against AIDS.

"Israeli medicine and public health are positioned as a real asset in African countries," said Dr. Inon Schenker, a director of Operation Abraham, the consortium that sent the doctors to Swaziland and plans to send more training teams to Africa.

"They recognize the expertise and experience gained in Israel over the past decade, where close to 100,000 male circumcisions have been conducted."

Israel's accidental expertise in conducting large-scale numbers of male circumcisions came with the mass wave of immigration from the former Soviet Union, which brought with it a dramatic rise in men re-



Operation Abraham surgeon Dr. Moshe Westreich trains a local surgeon in Swaziland in adult male circumcision methods while the patient reads a leaflet on preventing HIV/AIDS. (Photo: Jerusalem AIDS Project)

questing the procedure.

To meet the demand, Israeli hospitals set up special circumcision clinics in five hospitals throughout the country. In turn, Israeli doctors gained unique experience in performing a high number of procedures efficiently.

It's a model organizations such as the World Health Organization and the United Nations would like to see replicated in Africa as a tool

for combating the spread of HIV.

Answering the call has been Operation Abraham, a team of Israeli doctors and AIDS educators – Jews, Muslims and Christians – who this year made three training trips to Swaziland in what is considered a pilot program that they hope is just the start of their work.

The organization has had requests to do a similar training program in Uganda,

Lesotho, Namibia, Kenya and South Africa.

Their work is sponsored by the Jerusalem AIDS project and the Hadassah Medical Center, and they hope to recruit surgeons from abroad.

Dr. Eitan Gross, a pediatric surgeon at the Hadassah Hospital in Ein Kerem, who was in Swaziland and is the medical director of Operation Abraham, said he was surprised initially to hear that surgery could play a role in preventing the spread of AIDS.

Research has shown that male circumcision reduces the chance of HIV infection. Experts say the scientific evidence has shown that specific cells on the penis foreskin appear to be targeted by the virus. It also has been found that the non-removed foreskin can trap the virus on the skin, making infection more likely.

Gross said he was moved by his time in Swaziland, which has one of the highest rates of HIV infection in the world, and where the average life expectancy has plummeted to just 31 years.

"People came of their own free will," he said. "There was no publicity to

draw them in out of fears that we'd be overwhelmed by a massive number of clients. When we spoke to the men who came, many of them in their 20s and 30s, they told us about living amid the epidemic and what it's like to see so many people die."

Although nearly 30 per cent of the world's men are circumcised, the practice is quite rare in many southern African countries where AIDS has become a pandemic.

Dr. Jamal Garah, an Israeli Arab pediatrician, was among the Israeli doctors in Swaziland. He has experience in performing male circumcisions, usually on babies or young children in Israel's Muslim community.

"It's fitting that our project is named after Abraham," he said. "It symbolizes a measure of unity to give the message to other people that we can work together."

Officials from the World Health Organization traveled to Jerusalem in 2006 to gather information on Israel's expertise in the field.

"The circumstances in which adult male circumcision are done in some insti-

tutions in Israel are generally of a high standard with few complications," said Dr. Tim Hargreave, a leading British urological surgeon and technical advisor to the World Health Organization, explaining the organization's interest in Israel's experience.

Drawing in part on Israeli methodology, Hargreave helped author the World Health Organization manual on male circumcision that along with a teaching course, is now being used as part of government male circumcision programs in several countries in Africa.

Dr. Kiron Koshy was one of the doctors working in Swaziland trained by the Israeli team. He now conducts as many as 15 male circumcisions per week at the Catholic mission hospital where he works near the Mozambique border – more than twice the rate he was performing previously.

"I have now learned the technique and I can work faster," Koshy told JTA in a phone interview from Swaziland. "There are a lot of people coming in for the operation, and I think the numbers are only going to increase."

Meanwhile in San Francisco, Don Abramson, a former chairman of American Jewish World Service who has been advocating for the project, said he hopes it will help galvanize Diaspora Jewry to fight one of the world's biggest problems.

One of his ideas is to encourage Jews around the world to donate money to Operation Abraham whenever they attend a bris.

"My message to Jewish families is that a bris affirms the Divine covenant relationship with the child, but also demonstrates that their friends and family who care about the child celebrate that the child is healthy enough to have a bris," Abramson said. "A contribution to Project Abraham demonstrates a desire for others to be alive and healthy as well and could be a life-saving act."

More information about Operation Abraham is available at operation-ab.org.

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Nick and Norah and Tikkun Olam

Spoiler alert! There's an insightful exchange in the recent hit film, *Nick & Norah's Infinite Playlist*, where Norah, a Jewish high school senior, explains to her love interest, Nick, the meaning of the Hebrew phrase *Tikkun Olam* (repairing of the world). Nick replies that perhaps the concept speaks to the idea of the world becoming a better place when two lovers find each other.

Hollywood treatments of Jewish life have certainly evolved from the chopped liver sculpture decapitation scene in the 1969 film, *Goodbye Columbus*, to such creative and intelligent parsing of Talmudic phrases. But there is another lesson to be gleaned from the *Tikkun Olam* scene in this charmingly off-beat, coming-of-age film set during a single New York night. That is, social action and social justice can only take place if we internalize the humanity of the other. Like romantic partners coming together, fixing the world's ills – poverty, disease, racial injustice, human trafficking, etc. – will, arguably, never happen unless we examine how we think and talk about those who differ from us.

Social psychologists have long studied the dynamics of identity between groups, and how individuals view their sense of self in contrast to others. Being a woman gives rise to gender identity only insofar as a woman is aware of the existence of men; being white is only meaningful insofar as one is aware of blacks, Asians, etc. In the political realm, some observers have taken this to mean that conflict is inevitable, while others are more optimistic about the possibility of shared identity across social categories.

So while it is inevitable that human identity will, in part, reflect a natural sense of *otherness*, as a society we can decide what we will make of that other. The discourse surrounding the U.S. elections exemplifies the alarming lack of humanity that public discourse can lapse into. This is all the more disturbing in a democracy where all citizens are supposed to have the same formal rights, including the right to run for public office (although standards are more particular for U.S. presidential candidates, including having to be a natural born citizen).

As the media reported during the campaign, by attempting to discredit Senator Barack Obama's legitimacy as a potential president, many accused him of being a Muslim. Other brave individuals, such as retired U.S. general Colin Powell, a former secretary of state, responded by stating that Obama is a Christian, not a Muslim, but added, "The really right answer is: What if he is?"

The implication of these charges, of course, is that one religion is more American than another, and that Muslims do not really belong within the body politic of the United States. This is an insidious view, one that is not only morally repugnant, but can only serve to raise the level of intergroup tensions on a global scale.

We live in an increasingly globalized world where we often bump up against each other. Physically, in crowded cities; economically, through trade; and socially and intellectually, through the marketplace of ideas. Fifteen years ago, Samuel



Values, Ethics, Community

Mira Sucharov

Huntington hypothesized about a "clash of civilizations" occurring at the global level. The events surrounding 9/11 and the subsequent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have led many to believe that this dynamic, indeed, defines contemporary international life. But, in order to improve the social, economic and political ills ailing the world, what we need to ask is how we can get past the determinations of who belongs, and who doesn't, in our estimation of who counts.

Identity politics – attempting to delegitimize others by fixating on superficial differences from ourselves – obscures the ability to solve the big problems requiring joint action. If *Tikkun Olam* is partly about bringing two people together, maybe we can scale up that idea to the political level. We will never have enough political will to address the AIDS epidemic in Africa until we see those sufferers as being as important as SARS victims in Toronto. Millions will continue to perish in Darfur unless we have a view of those genocide victims as deserving of life. Sex trafficking will continue until we act on the fact that women are people, not objects. The homeless problem in our own cities will not improve unless we see the humanity in the souls of people living on our streets.

Helping fix the cracks in the structure of society – both locally and globally – will only happen by empathizing with others. And, if that means "loving the one you're with" through a night of band-chasing in New York, as Nick and Norah do, then so much the better. But while you're gazing longingly at each other, don't forget the voiceless people falling by the wayside. They, too, need us to look into their eyes, no matter what colour.



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- An elderly lady who likes crafts & sewing would love to meet someone with similar interests to help her get out of the house once in a while.
- A gentleman who enjoys long walks and Torah study could use an occasional companion. Campus area.
- Transportation:** Drivers are always needed to transport seniors to and from medical appointments, social opportunities, grocery shopping, and the like.
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- Friendly Visiting:** Requests come in constantly from family members needing a visitor for a shut-in. Weekly, bi-weekly or ad-hoc opportunities are waiting to be filled by someone with a little time and a lot of heart. Chat over coffee, take in a show, go bowling ... the opportunities are only as limited as your imagination.
- TeleShalom:** We are currently seeking volunteers to place weekday morning reassurance calls to isolated seniors. Each call takes approximately 2-3 minutes and can be done from your home, office or cell phone.
- Presenters:** JFS hosts several monthly seniors' luncheon programs. We are always on the lookout for specialists, artists, musicians, and others who can present for about 45 minutes in exchange for a hot lunch in great company.
- Share Your Expertise:** From time to time, we receive requests for things like filling out forms, putting up a Sukkah, changing dishes for Passover, and the like. If you have an expertise to share with someone in need, please let us know.
- Miriam's Well:** This monthly distribution program needs helpers to pack and hand out fresh fruits and vegetables on the 1st Monday of every month.

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How Birthright Israel forges Jewish identity

*Ten Days of Birthright Israel:
A Journey in Young Adult Identity*
By Leonard Saxe & Barry Chazan
Brandeis University Press, 2008
(paperback)
256 pages

Since its creation in 2000, Birthright Israel has sent more than 150,000 young adults on a free, 10-day trip to Israel. Its founders, philanthropists Charles Bronfman and Michael Steinhardt, envisioned a brief and powerful immersive experience in Israel that would help shore up Jewish identity among contemporary youth.

In demanding that the applicants, who are required to self-identify as Jewish and be between 18 and 26 years of age, have never previously participated in an organized trip to Israel, the program hopes to attract the least affiliated among young Jews – though certainly having never been on an 'organized' trip to Israel by the time one is 19 possibly says little about actual communal affiliation.

In *Ten Days of Birthright Israel: A Journey in Young Adult Identity*, authors Leonard Saxe and Barry Chazan make at least three central claims.

First, Birthright represents a new way of engaging in Jewish learning. Unlike the 'Israel experience' summer trips that had been offered since the state's founding, and especially after 1967, Birthright offers a new way of engaging Jewish youth experientially.

The trip uses a combination of tourism to ancient and contemporary Israeli sites, small-group discussions, extended interactions with Israeli youth (often soldiers), meetings with Israeli politicians, a Shabbat experience and a

Book Review

Mira Sucharov

mega-event bringing together thousands of trip-goers to hear keynote speakers and dance the night away. Participants often describe Birthright as "amazing," a term that is quoted frequently in the book, and one that my 21-year-old cousin, Dara Nadel, a 2006 Birthright participant, used, adding that the trip is "10 jam-packed days of touring, learning and partying."

The book doesn't make clear, however, how the summer-long Israel trips that many youth took prior to Birthright's founding differ in their pedagogical goals and identity effects. Nor does it offer data on whether enrolment in those trips has been affected. The authors do note, however, the opposition the proposal initially received. North American Jewish federations wanted participants to pay a portion of the trip, and some Israeli politicians – notably on the right – complained that Israel was helping fund Diaspora Jewish experiences at the expense of domestic Israeli needs.

Second, citing an in-depth study conducted by the Cohen Center at Brandeis University, the authors point out that Birthright alumni exhibit a collection of attitudes more tightly linked to Jewish identity across a host of issues. Compared to applicant non-participants (those who felt connected enough to Judaism or Israel to apply to Birthright, but did not ul-

timately go on a trip), participants are more likely to think of Israel as a "source of pride," less likely to think of Israel as a "militaristic society," more "connected to Israel" and more committed to "raising Jewish children."

The authors also note, however, that these presumed attitudinal changes did not match the level of actual changes in participants' behaviour following the trip.

Third, they argue that Birthright represents a "countercultural" stance. They ask, "Why should a program that caters to fostering the ethnic and religious identity of a particular group be of interest and be successful?"

This question speaks to the heart of the postmodern struggle between ethnic particularism and cosmopolitan identity. Ultimately, the authors demonstrate that Birthright succeeds in strengthening Jewish identity, but they discuss only briefly – and suggestively – the broader question posed.

Citing Robert Putnam's research on contemporary social connections, the authors argue that Birthright is "designed to create 'bonding' social capital" among Jews. They add that this sort of bond is the "glue that allows members of disparate subgroups to come together as a society."

The book does attempt to lay out a proposed relationship between ethnic and universal identity, arguing that "although it is possible that the program's Jewish-centricity will lead to an exclusive concern with the Jewish community, our understanding of the participants makes that highly unlikely."

It is perhaps difficult to assess this claim conclusively, given that the program's first participants are still only in their early-30s, but it is a plausible point.

The book reads, in places, like an advertisement for the program, although the authors claim that "although our view of the program is decidedly positive, our goal is not to promote the program but to explain and critically assess how and why it operates."

One passage describes a late-night, political discussion between the group's participants and several Israeli soldiers (also participating on the trip for the mandated *mifgash* – intercultural encounter – component) after a long day of hiking.

"Beer flows that night, to quench thirst, not to create drunkenness," the authors write.

Were these authors ever 20, in mixed company and surrounded by alcohol?

Finally, the book engages only fleetingly what is perhaps the elephant in the room: the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

They make clear that Birthright attempts to impart "the Jewish narrative," but it's not obvious what messages, beyond support for Israel as a Jewish state, participants are intended to absorb about the conflict. The trip does not seem to promote a particular view of the situation, except that, in Nadel's words, "everyone who does the trip goes home a Zionist."

It may be that the authors are simply reflecting the Birthright organizers' middle-of-the-road perspective on the conflict. But, when thinking about the role of the program in shaping Jewish identity, and if these youth are meant to be among the Diaspora Jewish leaders of tomorrow, perhaps Birthright should think more about the role of these youth in potentially ameliorating the dire situation in the Middle East.

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David and Beverly Gluzman from the Levitz family.

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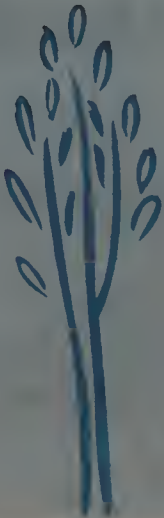
HY AND PAULINE HOCHBERG ENDOWMENT FUND

In memory of:
Danny Yachnin by Pauline Hochberg.

DOROTHY AND HY HYMES ENDOWMENT FUND

Birthday wishes to:
Hy Hymes by Ruth and Manny Shacter.

Continued on page 24



FOUNDATION DONATIONS

In memory of:

Brian Sher's mother by Dorothy and Hy Hymes.
Bela Lipnowski by Dorothy and Hy Hymes.

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In memory of:

David Molot by Roslyn and Arnie Kimmel.

R'fuah Sh'lemah to:

Andrea Arron by Roslyn and Arnie Kimmel.

Mazal Tov to:

Bonnie and Chuck Merovitz on the birth of their grandson by Roslyn and Arnie Kimmel.

Joan and Russell Kronick on the birth of their granddaughter by Roslyn and Arnie Kimmel.

In observance of the Yahrzeit of:

Sarah Kimmel, a dear mother and grandmother by Isabel and Norm Lesh.

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Birthday wishes to:

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Mazal Tov to:

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Dr. and Mrs. Andre Engel on the engagement of Sant by Edie Landau.

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Birthday wishes to:

Norman Lesh by the ALBERT- BAY- BISTRO Sunday morning gang.

R'fuah Sh'lemah to:

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BEN AND SHIRLEY LEVIN ENDOWMENT FUND

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Mazal Tov to:

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Joe and Evelyn Lief on Isaac's Bar Mitzvah by Sally and Elliott Levitan.

Anniversary wishes to:

Joe and Evelyn Lief by Sally and Elliott Levitan.

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Anniversary wishes to:

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Butch Zinman on the birth of his grandson by Bonnie and Chuck Merovitz.

In memory of:

Bela Lipnowski by Bonnie and Chuck Merovitz.

Birthday wishes:

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Birthday wishes to:

Dorothy Nadolny by Clair Krantzberg; and by Max and Phyllis Sternthal.

In memory of:

Larry Arron by Horace and Muriel Beilin; by Sally and Elliott Levitan; by Joany and Andy Katz; and by Mr. and Mrs. Lyon Sachs.

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In memory of:

Brownie Freedman by Phyllis and Alan Rackow.

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Bert Bronshter by Penny, Gordie, Zac and Steven Resnick.

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Birthday wishes to:

Mrs. Roberta Gottlieb by Penny, Gordie, Zac and Steven Resnick.

ALTI AND BEREL RODAL FAMILY FUND

Mazal Tov to:

Rabbi Shmuel and Dvora Rodal and Yisroel Meir and Bayla Rodal on the birth of Raizie by Alti and Berel Rodal.

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Mazal Tov to:

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Speedy recovery to:

Laya Shabinsky by Joany and Andy Katz.

SOL AND ZELAINE SHINDER ENDOWMENT FUND

Mazal Tov to:

Sol and Zelaïne Shinder on their granddaughter's Bat Mitzvah by Joan and Russell Kronick.

Shelli and Steven Kimmel on Leora's engagement by Sol and Zelaïne Shinder.

Judah and Margo Silverman by Sol and Zelaïne Shinder.

Birthday wishes to:

Leon Bronstein by Sol and Zelaïne Shinder.

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In memory of:

Nora Anderscn by Lorne, Laurie, Zak and Ben Shusterman.

Frances Garten by Lorne and Laurie Shusterman.

LINDA SILVERMAN MEMORIAL FUND

Birthday wishes to:

Hy Hymes by Marvin and Phyllis Silverman.

Continued on page 25

Sydney Schecter's meaningful gesture

Sydney Schecter, father of Jack Schecter (Librarian of the Greenberg Families Library), Estelle Gunner (volunteer for the Jewish Archives and Past President of AJA 50+), Brian Schecter and Mel Schecter, was a long-time resident of Ottawa's Jewish community. Sydney passed away peacefully on November 27, 2007, at the age of 90, and was the last of his brothers and sisters to pass (three brothers and four sisters).

Sydney had a deeply rooted attachment to the Ottawa community, which included owning a home, building a business, raising his family; a lifelong membership at Beth Shalom Congregation and great pride in the accomplishments of his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

As a way of giving back to the community he loved so much, Sydney and his wife Shirley opened their own fund, the Syd and Shirley Schecter Endowment Fund, through the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation in March 2000.

The Schecter family proudly contributed to this fund. "Every time he donated to his fund, he felt that he was truly helping his community. It was his way of giving back," commented Brian.

Given how Sydney and Shirley lived their lives and raised their children, it



Sydney Schecter, 90

seemed fitting that the Foundation should receive a last gift through a bequest from Sydney's estate to his fund. It was, in essence, a giving back to show his support to the community he was so proud to be a part of. The Syd and Shirley Schecter Endowment Fund will live on in their memory for generations to come.

To learn more about how you can leave a meaningful gift to the community through a bequest or other types of planned giving vehicles, contact the Foundation office at 613.798.4696, ext. 246 or contact your financial adviser.

FOUNDATION DONATIONS

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Jerry and Lily Penco on their 50th wedding anniversary by Shirley Steinberg.

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Mazal Tov to:

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In memory of:

Carmella Reznanski by Norma and Yudie Schacter.

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Happy and health New Year to:

Myrtle Borts by Sandy Marchello.

Speedy recovery to:

Sandy Fishbain by Sandy Marchello.

Andrea Aron by Stephen and Gail Victor.

Mazal Tov to:

Sandy Fishbain on the engagement of Jeff to Barbara by Sandy Marchello.

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R'Yuah Sh'lemah to:

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Happy and healthy New Year to:

Ron and Debbie Weiss by Tina and Ken Ages.

In memory of:

- Daniel Spring by Debbie and Ron Weiss.
- Stephen Dworkin by Debbie and Ron Weiss.
- Chaya Perel Mogilevsky by Debbie and Ron Weiss.

Weiss.

R'Yuah Sh'lemah to:

Gustavo Rymberg by Debbie and Ron Weiss.

Mazal Tov to:

Shelli and Steven Kimmel on the engagement of Leora by Debbie, Ron, Jess, Josh and Lauren Weiss.

IRVING AND DIANE WEXLER FAMILY FUND

In memory of:

Saul Abracen by Diane Wexler.

In observance of the Yahrzeit of:

Joseph and Freda Cohen, dear parents by Diane Wexler.

ZIPES KARANOFKY FAMILY ENDOWMENT FUND

In memory of:

Aubrey Gay by Helen and Rick Zipes and family.
Bela Lipnowski by Helen and Rick Zipes and family.

Mazal Tov to:

Judy and Jonathan Bosloy on the Bat Mitzvah of Mara by Helen and Rick Zipes and family.

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Shelli and Steven on the engagement of Leora by Joany and Andy Katz.

Alyce and Allan Baker by Joany and Andy Katz.

Michael Gennis and Diane Betel on their engagement by Joany and Andy Katz.

Norman Lieff and Francie Greenspoon on Isaac's Bat Mitzvah by Joany and Andy Katz.

In memory of:

Moshe Benlolo by Joany and Andy Katz.

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L'chaim!



Thank you from the bottom of my heart for making the Auxiliary Tea in my honour such a success. Deepest thanks to everyone who made donations, phone calls, or gave flowers and gifts. I was overwhelmed. Please accept this as my sincere and deepest thanks. You are the greatest.

Sarah Swedler

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Some special ways to say 'thanks'

I sometimes find that people are too intimidated to cook for me because I used to work for a living as a cook. They worry that I would be critical of their efforts. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. I am always grateful to be invited to a friend's house.

Opening up your home and kitchen to others is a wonderful act of generosity and it should be rewarded with a proper thank you. A bouquet of flowers from the supermarket or a bottle of wine are a nice gesture, but, with a little forethought, these gifts can go from ordinary to extraordinary. Here is my top five list of hostess gifts.

Flowers already arranged in a vase

If you are going to bring flowers to say thanks, keep in mind that your host or hostess has a million last-minute details to take care of when having guests for dinner. The last thing he or she needs is someone showing up with a bunch of flowers that need arranging in a vase.

For less than \$10, you can buy a simple glass vase in almost any supermarket. Other great places to look for reasonably priced stylish vases include Canadian Tire (the housewares department is fantastic), Ikea, HomeSense and Winners.

Instead of buying a mixed bouquet at the supermarket, buy several bunches of all one type of flower or several bunches of different types of flowers, all in the same colour. Arrange them yourself in the vase and people will think you

spent a lot more than you actually did. They will also be so grateful they did not have to hunt for a vase and do the arranging themselves.

Fresh herbs in a ceramic flower pot

If your hosts love cooking or gardening, they will probably appreciate a pot of fresh herbs that they can sit on the kitchen windowsill and snip from all winter long.

Go the extra distance and spring for a pretty ceramic pot to put them in. It hides the cheap plastic planter the herbs are sold in.

A dozen new tea towels

I don't know anyone who wouldn't appreciate 12 brand new tea towels. It's something you always need, but buying

Dukkah

Makes about 2 cups

Warning: Dukkah can easily become an obsession. The more you eat, the more addictive it becomes. Serve with warmed pita and extra-virgin olive oil. Dip pita into olive oil, then into dukkah and eat.

- 1/2 cup hazelnuts
- 1/2 cup shelled pistachios
- 1 cup sesame seeds
- 2 tablespoons cumin seeds
- 2 tablespoons coriander seeds
- 1 teaspoon kosher or sea salt

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Place the hazelnuts on a baking sheet and bake for about 5 minutes or until fragrant. While the nuts are still hot, pour them onto a tea towel. Fold the towel over them to cover and rub vigorously to remove the skins. Set aside to cool.

Place pistachios on baking sheet and toast for about 5 minutes in preheated oven. Set aside to cool.

In a dry skillet over medium heat, toast the sesame seeds until light golden brown. Pour into a medium bowl as soon as they are done so they will not continue toasting. In the same skillet, toast the coriander and cumin seeds while shaking the pan or stirring occasionally until they begin to pop. Transfer to a food processor. Process until finely ground, and then pour into the bowl with the sesame seeds.

Place the cooled hazelnuts and pistachios into the food processor, and process until mixture resembles coarse breadcrumbs. Do not over process. You do not want nut butter. Stir into the bowl with the spices. Season with salt and mix well.

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yourself new ones seems like a waste when you have a drawer full of perfectly serviceable (but stained) ones already.

There are so many inexpensive pretty towels available now. President's Choice makes some great ones. I have also found some beautiful ones at Winners.

If you want to elevate this gift to the next level, buy a beautiful box to wrap them up in. An ornate cardboard hat box or a brightly coloured file box would be ideal.

Wine Tumblers

About a year ago, while shopping at Home Outfitters, I came upon a set of four Riedel stemless wine glasses, packaged as a gift set in a fun party tube.

In France, where wine is served casually at every meal, people have been drinking wine out of glass tumblers for years.

I bought several sets and now use them as my everyday wine glasses. They make a nice modern change from the fancy crystal stemware I got as a wedding gift all those years ago. At only \$32 for a set of four 11-ounce glasses (for white wine), or \$38 for a set of four 21-ounce glasses (for red wine), they make a great gift.

If you decide to be extra generous and add a bottle of wine to this gift, be sure you let your hosts know that you do not expect them to open it for dinner that night. It puts your host in an awkward situation if they have already chosen a special wine to go with the food they have cooked.

Dukkah, Pita and Olive Oil

Dukkah is a coarsely ground nut and spice blend (hazelnuts, dried chick peas, pistachios, cumin, coriander and salt) that originated in Egypt many years ago.

I learned that Egyptian street vendors sell small paper cones with dukkah, along with strips of pita bread. Customers dip the bread into the vendor's bowl of olive oil and then dunk it into their cone of dukkah.

For our girls' weekend, I toasted up some Pita Break flax pita and cut it into wedges. I set out a bowl of extra virgin olive oil and a bowl of dukkah. It was gone in about 15 minutes.

It's positively addictive and goes great with a glass of Sauvignon Blanc.

You can make the dukkah yourself (recipe below), or order it online from a specialty food shop in Orford, Quebec (crousset.com).

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A jump start to Chanukah book reviews

When I have several Chanukah storybooks on my shelf, as I do now, I can't help but feel the holiday breathing down my neck; even though it really isn't. Nevertheless, I'm reverting to the tried-and-true solution of devoting two columns to reviewing Chanukah books.

When I've done this in the past, readers have occasionally asked whether the books are reviewed in the first or second column implies a subtle preference. The answer is no. Unless books deal with similar themes, the order in which they appear in a two-part series is purely by chance.

Letter on the Wind: A Chanukah Tale

By Sarah Marwil Lamstein

Illustrated by Neil Waldman

Boyd's Mills Press 2007

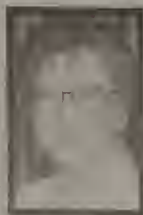
32 pages Ages 4-8

Based on a Tunisian Jewish folk tale, *Letter on the Wind* is a moving, lyrically written and magnificently illustrated book infused with an aura of spiritual intrigue. Portraying an act of faith and its consequences, the story replicates the Chanukah theme of dedication in both an obvious and a less obvious way.

But what do poverty, envy and gossip have to do with Chanukah? In this story, everything, as Hayim, the poorest villager in a drought-stricken, destitute, far-off village sends a letter to the Almighty asking for help. Without it, the villagers will have no oil for their menorahs and will not be able to celebrate Chanukah.

Of course, all the villagers, and especially the scribe who reluctantly writes the letter, think Hayim is crazy. A letter to the Almighty? How do you send such a letter? Hayim uses the wind. When the letter lands at the feet of Ger Yehudah, a famous Jewish merchant in a far-off city, the merchant realizes he has been chosen as God's instrument to provide the help.

The merchant immediately sends out a caravan packed with pure olive oil, a year's worth of food and a bejewelled silver menorah. But there was no return address on the letter. How will the caravan reach the right person? That, too, is a matter of faith. All goes well as the caravan is unloaded outside Hayim's door on the night of the first night of Chanukah.



Kid Lit

first night of Chanukah.

Hayim is sure he's receiving a gift from the Almighty. He eagerly shares the largess with all the villagers. But the scribe is less sure when he sees an inscription on the silver menorah that reads, "Ger Yehudah."

"Is our Hayim a thief?" the scribe asks in a letter to Ger Yehudah, turning what should have been a wonderfully happy holiday for Hayim and the village into one of suspicion, malice and, by the seventh night, lack of faith.

Swift action from Ger Yehudah, matched by Hayim's kindness and generosity to a stranger, resolve the issue. The Almighty has indeed bestowed a wonderful gift on two men of faith as everyone who reads *Letter on the Wind* and admires its vibrantly flowing watercolour and ink illustrations will attest.

Jodie's Hanukkah Dig

By Anna Levine

Illustrated by Ksena Topaz

Kar-Ben Publishing 2008

32 pages Ages 5-9

Jodie's Hanukkah Dig is a charming version of the well-worn theme that, sometimes, children can accomplish what bigger folks can't. Set in modern Israel during Chanukah, the story focuses on a young girl's desire to become an archaeologist like her father.

Imagine everyone's surprise, then, when it is Jodie, rather than her dad or the famous archaeologist Prof. Shor Hoffer, who overcomes all obstacles to be the first person to explore and understand the new archaeological site.



By Sarah Marwil Lamstein, illustrated by Neil Waldman

archeological site at Modi'in, where the Maccabee revolution against the Syrians began.

Showing the same grit, determination, nimbleness and bravery as the Maccabees of old, Jodie's keen eyesight results in confirmation that the site does, indeed, date back to the time of Judah Maccabee.

A playful, though predictable story, *Jodie's Hanukkah Dig* provides young readers with interesting information about the importance of archaeology in Israel and what actually occurs at an archaeological site. Colourful, realistic illustrations enhance the developing story line beautifully, matching its pace. Jodie's determination

The fine art of asking 'How are you?'



Humour me, please

It's a simple question, but one that can be asked in many different ways. And the answer can be just as varied. In *Humour me, please*, the author explores the art of asking and answering this question in a way that is both humorous and insightful.

Why do we ask "How are you?" and what does it really mean? The book explores the social conventions surrounding this question and how it can be used to connect with others. It's a fun and thought-provoking read for anyone interested in the nuances of human communication.

Humour me, please is a charming book that explores the art of asking and answering the question "How are you?" in a way that is both humorous and insightful. The author provides a variety of examples and tips for how to ask and answer this question in a way that is both meaningful and enjoyable.

"You think I haven't had conversations before? You think I have no experience with these things? What am I, a complete nincompoop? Of course I know how these conversations go. Besides, I have had conversations with you before."

The book is a collection of short stories and essays that explore the art of asking and answering the question "How are you?" in a way that is both humorous and insightful. The author provides a variety of examples and tips for how to ask and answer this question in a way that is both meaningful and enjoyable.

"All right, I'm backing up a few steps and you'll tell me when we'll meet and I'll say 'Hi, how are you?' Dear..."
"Dear..."
"OK, here I come. Hi, how are you?"
"Fine, how are you?"
"I am extremely agitated because you just said 'Fine.'"
"Well, I don't have time to talk now. So, see you."
"I knew it!"

WHAT'S GOING ON November 24 to December 14, 2008

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calendar/planitjewish](http://www.jewishottawa.org/calendar/planitjewish)



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CANDLELIGHTING BEFORE

Nov 28 ☆ 4:05 pm
Dec 5 ☆ 4:02 pm
Dec 12 ☆ 4:02 pm
Dec 19 ☆ 4:04 pm

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24

Negev Dinner, sponsored by the Jewish National Fund of Ottawa, honouring Barbara Crook and Dan Greenberg, with keynote speaker Ambassador Dennis Ross, special adviser to President-elect Barack Obama on Middle East issues, Museum of Civilization, 6:00 pm. Info: 613-798-2411.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25

Why Faith Matters, sponsored by the SJCC, Rabbi David Wolpe of Sinai Temple in Los Angeles discusses his personal journey through life-threatening illness and tackles issues such as science and religion, atheism, whether religion causes war and how to read the Bible in a modern context; part of "Live from New York's 92nd Street Y" series, 8:15 pm. Info: 613-798-9818, ext. 271.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27

Yiddish-speaking group "Lomir Reydn Yiddish," hosted by Jewish Family Services, 2255 Carling Avenue, suite 301, 10:00 am. Info: 613-722-2225, ext. 325.

5th Annual Best of Hebrew U, sponsored by the Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, an evening of enlightenment with world-renowned professors, keynote speaker Dr. Eitan Alimi from the Department of Political Science on "Israel: A Political Update," Agudath Israel Congregation, 1400 Coldrey Avenue, 5:00 pm. Full program details: www.chu.org. Info: 613-829-3150.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29

Saturday Night Fever, dance the night away, Congregation Beth Shalom, 151 Chapel Street, 8:00 pm. Info: 613-798-3501, ext. 223.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1

"Match & Marry," documentary, sponsored by Carleton University's Max and Tessie Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies and the SJCC; filmed mainly in New York, it offers a fresh look into the tradition of matchmaking that dates back thousands of years; the philosophy of marriage and the roles of men and women within Orthodox marriage are also explored, 7:00 pm. Info: 613-520-2600, ext. 1320.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4

The Kibitz Club, sponsored by Jewish Family Services and Congregation Beth Shalom, seniors' program with entertainment; transportation available, Congregation Beth Shalom, 151 Chapel Street, 12:00 pm. Info: 613-798-3501, ext. 223.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7

Mitzvah Day, sponsored by Young Adults Division of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa; everyone is invited to donate

their hair to Locks of Love; professional stylists are donating their time to cut the ponytails and style donors' hair. Donations to the Snowsuit Fund welcome; many activities for all ages. Info: 613-798-4696, ext. 270.

Chinese Auction – Chocolate Chances, sponsored by Torah Academy and Hymie and Shirley Schildkraut, school fundraiser, delectable food, prizes, Torah Academy of Ottawa, 1119 Lazard, 7:00 pm. Info: 613-274-0110, ext. 116.

COMING SOON

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17

Let's do Lunch, sponsored by Jewish Family Services and Congregation Agudath Israel, monthly seniors' luncheon and entertainment, Agudath Israel, 1400 Coldrey Avenue, 12:00 pm. Info: 613-728-3501.

FEBRUARY 21 TO MARCH 1, 2009

Tour the winery industry in Israel, sponsored by Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, with Join Tony Aspler, Canada's premier wine critic, and a unique and wonderful tasting tour of Israel's growing boutique wine industry. Info: 613-829-3150.

Unless otherwise noted, activities take place at The Joseph and Rose Ages Family Building, 21 Nadorly Sachs Private.

This information is taken from the community calendar maintained by the Jewish Ottawa InfoCentre. Organizations which would like their events to be listed, no matter where they are to be held, should send the information to InfoCentre coordinator Benita Siemiatycki via e-mail at bsiemiatycki@jewishottawa.com or fax at 613-798-4695. She can also be reached by telephone at 613-798-4544. Accurate details must be provided and all events must be open to the Jewish public.

Give a Chanukah gift subscription to the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin*!

Special rates valid until January 16, 2009.

See page 15 for details.



Condolences

Condolences are extended
to the families of:

Isle Cohen
Annette Lipsey, Toronto
(mother of Shaina Lipsey)
Isaac Rabinovitch
Leslie Sela

May their memory
be a blessing always.

The CONDOLENCE COLUMN
is offered as a public service
to the community.
There is no charge.

For a listing
in this column,
please call
Carolene Preap,
613-798-4696, ext. 232.
Voice mail is available.

BULLETIN DEADLINES

NOVEMBER 26 FOR DECEMBER 15*

2009

JANUARY 7 FOR JANUARY 26
JANUARY 21 FOR FEBRUARY 9
FEBRUARY 4 FOR FEBRUARY 23
FEBRUARY 18 FOR MARCH 9
MARCH 4 FOR MARCH 23

* Community-wide Issue (all dates subject to change)

Readers
and advertisers
are advised
that the next edition
of the *Bulletin*
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This is a
community-wide
edition.
The deadline date
is Wednesday,
November 26, 2008.